



# HEARTS AWAKE

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AMELIA JOSEPHINE BURR



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HEARTS AWAKE

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BY AMELIA JOSEPHINE BURR

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HEARTS AWAKE

THE SILVER TRUMPET

SYLVANDER AND CLARINDA

LIFE AND LIVING

IN DEEP PLACES

THE ROADSIDE FIRE

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NEW YORK  
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

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HEARTS  
AWAKE  

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**THE PIXY**

*A Play*  
*by*  
*Amelia Josephine*  
*Burr*



*New York*  
*George H. Doran Company*

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TO J.

"A Comrade's troth is the Romany gold  
And we're taking the road together."

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Some of the poems in this volume are reprinted by courtesy of "Everybody's Magazine," "The Outlook," "The Bellman," "Reedy's Mirror," "The Century," "The Poetry Journal," "Life," "The Woman's Home Companion," "Scribner's Magazine," "The Bookman," and "The Masque of Poets," in which they originally appeared.



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## CONTENTS

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## CONTENTS

	Page
Our Flag . . . . .	13
Who Is My Neighbor? . . . . .	14
Serbia to America, 1918 . . . . .	15
New England Fishing Song, 1918 . . . . .	17
A Priest of France . . . . .	18
A Rose for France . . . . .	20
Carey's Men . . . . .	23
The Troop Train . . . . .	25
How Shall We Know You? . . . . .	30
Not by Bread Alone . . . . .	32
Restoration . . . . .	33
Mr. Valiant Passes Over . . . . .	35
Joyce Kilmer . . . . .	37
Singers in the Service . . . . .	38
A Lie-Awake Song	
Night Magic . . . . .	40
Romany Gold . . . . .	41
The Romany Sign . . . . .	43
Calypso . . . . .	45
Beatrice Speaks from Heaven . . . . .	47

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CONTENTS

---

	Page
Unpunished? . . . . .	49
God's Challenge . . . . .	50
Two Songs . . . . .	52
Windflowers . . . . .	53
Barbe Verrue . . . . .	54
Romance . . . . .	56
Under the Fig Tree . . . . .	58
On Latmos . . . . .	62
Gifts . . . . .	71
The Pixy . . . . .	73



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H E A R T S    A W A K E

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## OUR FLAG

**O**F old it was our heritage, the red and white  
and blue.

Our grandsires died to raise it and our sires  
to keep it true.

We prayed we might be worthy of their  
memory as we cast

In starry beauty to the wind the banner of  
our past,

But now—O God, we name to Thee our liv-  
ing and our dead.

Bone of our bone the white has grown, flesh  
of our flesh the red.

Our substance and our souls we pledge to  
keep it undefiled.

Of old it was our heritage—to-day it is our  
child.

## WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR

**W**HAT is my home to me, if I shut out the  
city?

What is my country to me, if I take no  
thought for the world?

What is my friend to me, if I am cold to  
mankind?

What is my conscience to me, if I forget  
God?

SERBIA TO AMERICA

1918

HARK, from the East a keen and bitter cry—  
New tears are flowing in the furrows of  
old sorrow.

On your wasted fields your dead lie like  
fallen leaves.

Only the Pale Harvester garners heavy  
sheaves—

How have you the courage to struggle  
toward to-morrow,

Serbia, Serbia, land that will not die?

I have stood for Freedom—Freedom  
cannot perish.

I have stood for Honor—Honor must  
endure.

But my children starve, the children  
who should cherish

SERBIA TO AMERICA (continued)

For the world's to-morrow my spirit  
flaming-pure.

You who sit in safety, you whose babes  
are fed,

You who by the peril of other men are  
free,

Listen to my living ere the hour be  
sped,

Lest you hear forever the silence of my  
dead.

Serbia, Serbia, God hears. Do we?

NEW ENGLAND FISHING SONG, 1918

**D**OES he think to scare us from sailing by a  
threat of death on the sea?

It's little the man at Potsdam knows of  
such men as we.

We have wrested our living so long from  
the grip of the jealous waves

That half of the stones in our churchyard  
mark no graves.

We do not ask to be confined where we were  
born and bred,

Nor our women whimper and cringe when  
they cannot bury their dead.

Now that the weal of the world comes to  
our nets with the cod,

We who could dare for ourselves, shall we  
play the coward for God?

Let them sink a score of our fleets, we will  
sail, and sail again.

It's little the man at Potsdam knows of New  
England men!

## A PRIEST OF FRANCE

**H**E was too old to fight, they said—  
But though the frost was on his head  
The holy fire was in his heart;  
So as an Aumonier he came,  
Bold as a paladin aflame  
To honor his beloved's name  
By playing well a hero's part.

There was no weariness for him.  
His faded eyes were never dim  
In finding where the wounded lay.  
His frail old limbs were strong to plod  
Across the marsh of bloody sod  
That none might go uncheered to God  
Without His love to light the way.

So often at the final word  
A woman's name was what he heard;



## A PRIEST OF FRANCE (continued)

Then he said tenderly, "I know—"  
His eyes grown wistful for the sight  
Of a little dingy church, all bright  
With candles for a holy night,  
Our Lady smiling in the glow.

At last an obus had its will—  
One leg was torn away, but still  
Among the dying he crawled on.  
Another shot—this time he fell  
And could not rise . . . he heard his bell  
Ringing the Angelus . . . out of hell  
And into Heaven, he was gone.

Little and dingy, but the light  
Of candles falls by day and night  
Upon a soldier's medal there  
Set shrine-like by the chancel side,  
For to the Church that was his bride,  
Whose lover he had lived and died,  
France gave his Croix de Guerre.

A ROSE FOR FRANCE

(A True Story)

SOLDIERS three at a county fair;  
Soldiers—the eldest is only a boy—  
Come to saunter and smile and stare  
And perhaps to let the girls enjoy  
The set of the khaki new and smart  
On the strong young shoulders held so  
square.  
Clean and sturdy of limb and heart,  
Soldiers three at a county fair.

A Red Cross booth where the workers sit  
All in white, and among them three  
Gentle old women who knit and knit  
In a quaint sweet dress from over the sea—  
Sorrowful flotsam of ravaged France,  
Under their kerchiefs woes untold,

A ROSE FOR FRANCE (continued)

And their capfrills hide from the careless  
glance

The patient eyes of the stricken old.

How should a boy's heart understand  
The glory and grief of those knitters gray?  
A moment's halt for the blithe young band,  
Then they drift with the crowd away—  
Ah, but see! they are back again,  
A crimson rose in the hand of each,  
And slowly, clumsily, as it were pain  
To put his soul into speech.

"We fellows thought—" so the eldest spoke  
With a flush that burned to his close-cropped  
hair,

"That the old French ladies—" his young  
voice broke—

"Should have a posy to wear."

France, O France! did you feel that day  
The beating heart of this land of ours  
Close at your side in the heat of the fray,—  
Our love in the blood-red flowers?

A ROSE FOR FRANCE (continued)

Those lads — and others — shall bring,  
maybe,

A brighter rose to your breast, O France,  
When shoulder to shoulder the foe shall see  
Your sons and our own advance—

The rose you have scattered ungrudgingly  
On the fields where at last we may bear our  
part—

A rose with the thorns of Calvary,  
And its root in a mother's heart.

## CAREY'S MEN

THEIR hearts were hot as youth's with generous fire

To give their utmost—wisdom said, too late;

But destiny cried Yea to their desire,  
And fearlessly they grasped the hand of fate.  
Between the Prussian tyrant and his goal  
The line of Britain's army broke—and then  
Arose a land's imperishable soul  
And England's laborers were Carey's Men.

Theirs was the task to build the roads for feet

On the great march against the power of Mars.

They asked not if the drudgery were sweet,  
They only did it—till the kindly stars  
Decreed they too should taste the uttermost

CAREY'S MEN (continued)

Of sacrifice's costly joy, and then  
Shouting they leaped exultant to their post,  
And Yankee engineers were Carey's Men.

Scabbarded swords that God alone can know  
The temper of, we live our days, and then  
For each of us, at last, His bugles blow.  
Grant us to meet Thy test like Carey's  
Men!

(Brigadier General Sandeman Carey held the gap between the Third and Fifth British Armies in the first days of the German drive in Picardy with a hastily organized force of Labor Battalions, Engineers, and any one else in reach.)

## THE TROOP TRAIN

### I

A HEAD of them the ocean with its devil-  
haunted miles,  
Those brown young faces with their brave,  
strained smiles,  
And I must show a good cheer and wave  
as they go past  
Because of all their Godspeeds mine may be  
the last.

Father of all free men, be Thou their  
strength and shield  
In the perils of the furlough and the perils  
of the field!  
Clean and strong and beautiful, bring them  
back again,

THE TROOP TRAIN (continued)

Those dear boyish faces at the windows of  
the train!

Yes, and make me worthy to welcome them  
that day—

To wave to them as gallantly as when they  
went away,

Saying, "Smiling I may greet you, for I  
have done my share.

Here have I been faithful, as you were faithful  
there."

2

THEY used to thunder sorrow in the night,  
Those heavy troop-trains passing—and by  
day,

When I stood waving to the windows bright  
With brave boy faces, it was hard to show  
A spirit worthy of their greeting gay.

But now the wheels are singing as they go—  
There's the Arizona cowboy who is homesick  
for the rancho



THE TROOP TRAIN (continued)

And the yelp of a coyote where the Gila  
waters run.

There's the laughing lad from Oregon with  
cheeks like Portland roses

And a wound stripe that he got in the Ar-  
gonne.

There's the Louisiana Frenchman with a  
golden star to witness

How he left his pleasant rice-fields with the  
first to volunteer.

There's the ace from Minneapolis who  
broke a German prison,

And it's only by a miracle he's here.

There's the Indiana circus-clown whose  
tumbling days are over,

But the soul of him is stronger than his  
spine can ever be.

There's the blue-eyed boy from Georgia,  
with a drawl like golden syrup,

And his buddy who is bound for Tennessee.

There's the lean keen Yankee fighter who is  
going back to battle

THE TROOP TRAIN (continued)

With briefs instead of bullets at his place on  
Beacon Street.

There's the lad who offered Liberty his  
clean young mind and body,  
And who smiles because she only took his  
feet.

There's the sergeant who swore off ten  
years to get himself in khaki,  
And his wound would not have lamed him if  
he hadn't been so old.

There's the fellow with the Croix de Guerre  
who hides it in his pocket—

It's a long, long trail to get that story told!  
There's the boy whose eyes are dark with  
incommunicable horror—

No scar upon his body but his heart has felt  
the flame—

While another went through hell without a  
scorch upon his spirit  
And his mother's eyes will find him still the  
same.

From Atlantic to Pacific, from Dakota down  
to Texas,

THE TROOP TRAIN (continued)

America is listening for those wheels upon  
the road.

Hearts are beat for beat with them and  
prayers are keeping time with them.

O Father, bless the troop trains and their  
load!

To the forest, to the mountain, to the prairie  
and the mesa,

To the silver southern beaches and the  
Maine rocks cold with foam,

To the loving hearts that wait behind the  
star-flag in the window,

The boys are going home—home—home!

## HOW SHALL WE KNOW YOU?

LADS who went laughing where your comrades died—

Maimed though you were, whose spirit did  
not swerve—

When the worn uniforms are laid aside,  
How shall we know you, lads we love to  
serve?

To all men who go haltingly in pain  
We must be quick in kindness, lest it be  
That one of those who saved us ask in vain  
Our thanks for what he gave so willingly.

All blindness henceforth we must sacred  
hold

Lest we slight one on whom the shadow fell  
In holier crusade than those of old,  
At Chateau-Thierry or at St. Mihiel,

HOW SHALL WE KNOW YOU? (continued)

And every troubled life that walks apart,  
Darkened as by mysterious poison-smoke,  
We dare not judge lest we misjudge a heart  
Which bore the sacrificial fire—and broke.

So high the cost that we should understand  
True brotherhood—has it at last sufficed?  
Show us, Lord Love, thy wound in every  
hand—

In every heart the shadow of the Christ!

## NOT BY BREAD ALONE

**H**E laughed aloud to see the table spread.  
For all his khaki and his three gold bars,  
Yes, and the scars  
On his thin face, he still was such a boy,  
So frankly simple in the greedy joy  
With which he ate his supper, that I smiled  
For happy thankfulness that all war's harms  
And horrors had no power to blight in him  
The everlasting Child.  
"Home cooking will taste good to you," I  
said.  
He paused with lifted fork, distended cheek,  
And wistful eyes that made my own grow  
dim.  
"If I could just get Mother in my arms  
I wouldn't ask to eat, not for a week!"

## RESTORATION

THEY look upon us through the mystic door,  
Those who have passed, those who shall  
come to birth,  
Waiting for us, the living, to restore  
Beauty and fruitfulness to ravaged earth.  
Where there were trees there must be trees  
again,  
Sweet servants of the soil's imperious needs,  
Because the Spring must not return in vain  
Nor Autumn's bounty waste itself in weeds.  
Where there was hope there must again be  
hope,  
Undaunted beauty shining through the  
scars,  
Because however men may fall and grope  
They must not lose the everlasting stars.  
It were the work of angels to revive  
The orchard's fragrant ecstasy of flowers,

RESTORATION (continued)

To bid the murdered forest wake alive—  
The work of angels—and God makes it ours.  
A still diviner labor to reflower  
The spirit's orchards after hate's red blight,  
And He, the Lord of Life, who understands  
All things, has laid it in our faltering hands.  
O Will of God, upon our hands be power!  
O Love of God, within our hearts be light!



## MR. VALIANT PASSES OVER

(January 6, 1919)

WHEN the Post came and told him that at  
last

The pitcher that so faithfully and long  
Had served his fellow-creatures in their  
thirst

Was broken at the fountain, Valiant said:  
"I am going to my Father's; and although  
Not easily I came to where I am,  
My pains upon the journey were well  
spent.

My sword I give to him who shall succeed  
My pilgrim steps upon the Royal Road;  
My courage and my skill I leave to him  
Who can attain them—but my marks and  
scars

I carry with me for my King to see  
As witness of His battles that I fought."

MR. VALIANT PASSES OVER (continued)

As he went down into the river, many  
Stood on the bank and heard him say: "O  
death,  
Where is thy sting?" And as the water  
grew  
Deeper—"O grave, where is thy victory?"  
So he passed over, and the trumpets all  
Sounded for him upon the other side.

John Bunyan, did you laugh in para-  
dise  
For joy to-day, to see your dream  
come true?

## JOYCE KILMER

SURELY the saints you loved visibly came  
To welcome you, that day in Picardy—  
Stephen whose dying eyes beheld his Lord,  
Michael, a living blade of crystal flame,  
And all the flower of heavenly chivalry  
Smiling upon you, calling you by name.  
Leaving your body like a broken sword  
You went with them—and now, beyond our  
sight,  
Still in the ranks of God you sing and fight,  
For death to you was one more victory.

## SINGERS IN THE SERVICE

WE who are called arise  
To an imperious unaccustomed toil  
And lay aside the garments that we wore  
Trailing the quiet years that went before—  
The old serenities  
And the familiar beauty. To the soil  
We go, to elemental force and stress,  
To own and to defy our weariness;  
And we breathe beauty where we never  
thought  
Beauty could be, and brotherhood un-  
sought  
Is warm in us, who wished for it amiss  
And coldly at our ease—how long ago!  
We live, who sang of life we did not know.  
And more than all our loss and gain, we  
see  
Another age, the happy heir of this—

SINGERS IN THE SERVICE (continued)

Children of the future, clean and free,  
Wearing with new majesty the dear  
Familiar beauty that we laid aside;  
In their illumined eyes  
Fixed holy stars, the old serenities;  
Before their joyous feet a way made clear  
By the great strife where we saw God—  
and died.

## NIGHT MAGIC

(A Lie-Awake Song)

**T**HE apples falling from the tree  
    Make such a heavy bump at night  
    I always am surprised to see  
    They are so little, when it's light;

**A**ND all the dark just sings and sings  
    So loud, I cannot see at all  
    How frogs and crickets and such things  
    That make the noise, can be so small.

**T**HEN my own room looks larger, too—  
    Corners so dark and far away—  
    I wonder if things really do  
    Grow up at night and shrink by day?

**F**OR I dream sometimes, just as clear,  
    I'm bigger than the biggest men—  
    Then mother says, "Wake up, my dear!"  
    And I'm a little boy again.

ROMANY GOLD

THERE'S a crackle of brown on the leaf's  
crisp edge  
And the goldenrod blooms have begun to  
feather.  
We're two jolly vagabonds under a hedge  
By the dusty road together.

COULD an emperor boast such a house as  
ours,  
The sky for a roof and for couch the clover?  
Does he sleep as well under silken flowers  
As we, when the day is over?

HE sits at ease at his table fine  
With the richest of meat and drink before  
him.  
I eat my crust with your hand in mine,

ROMANY GOLD (continued)

And your eyes are cups of a stronger wine  
Than any his steward can pour him.

**W**HAT if the autumn days grow cold?  
Under one cloak we can brave the  
weather.  
A comrade's troth is the Romany gold,  
And we're taking the road together.



## THE ROMANY SIGN

O VER the hills with the Romany train  
Through the sweet wet woods and the  
whispering rain,  
Looking back through veils of gray  
To the roofs of the town where we paused  
to-day.  
There in the crowded market-place  
Is a Romany heart with a Gorgio face.  
Where did you find the heart of my clan  
Under the shadow of roof and spire?  
Did your mother dream of a Romany man  
In the house of your Gorgio sire?  
Even so shall you dream of me  
When you light the hearth for a fair white  
bride—  
Of a path untrodden, a door untried,  
And an hour that is never to be.  
I have set my patteran

THE ROMANY SIGN (continued)

Deep in your Romany heart.  
I broke a branch from my tree of life  
Where the sweetest buds had begun to  
start—  
And they never shall bloom, but they never  
shall fall.  
Wide are the ways of your feet and mine—  
It's the market-place for the Gorgio face,  
And the roof, and the spire, and the fair  
white wife.  
I'm over the hills with the Romany chal,  
And there's never a fire shall warm us twain  
The width of a world apart.  
But—what is a world to the Romany heart  
That follows the Romany sign?

CALYPSO

WANDERER, we must part—so the gods  
decree.

You must go again to Ithaca.

The cold green waves shall wash you of  
the memory of me,

Breaking on the coast of Ithaca.

Built we a house of dreams, beautiful in  
seeming,

But for those the Thunderer wakes, there  
is no more dreaming.

Go now, spread your sail, turn your prow  
to sea—

Yonder lies the way to Ithaca.

THEIRS is to obey, whom the gods com-  
mand—

Holy is the hearth in Ithaca.

Home and harvest are waiting for your  
hand—

## CALYPSO (continued)

Fruitful are the fields of Ithaca.  
Love the life you chose while it still is yours  
for living,  
Lest the gods take back again the treasures  
of their giving.  
Passes our joy like our footprints in the  
sand—  
Granite are the cliffs of Ithaca.

I HAVE sent him back, at the gods'  
decree—  
I have sent him back to Ithaca.  
Never will I walk again beside the twi-  
light sea  
On the shore that looks toward Ithaca  
Lest the wind should bring to him a  
breath of days gone by,  
Of the beauty and the sorrow of his  
madness that was I. . . .  
Peace to him and his, O Zeus! I ask  
no more of thee—  
Peace upon that home in Ithaca.

## BEATRICE SPEAKS FROM HEAVEN

SERENE upon the heights above the world  
I stand forever to his longing soul  
A shining refuge from the cares of life,  
I, who enskied his mind and freed his song  
To weave its harmony with the singing stars  
Where Beatrice is all of Heaven to him.  
But when he flings his weary body down  
There in our Florence, there's a hand that  
soothes  
His hot and furrowed forehead. Coarse with  
toil  
And reddened in his service is that hand—  
Callous, but so tender in its touch!  
I bless thee, Gemma's palm upon his brow—  
Blessings drawn like blood-drops from my  
heart,  
That would be tears, were this not Paradise.  
Dante, thou lovest me—I know, I know—

BEATRICE SPEAKS FROM HEAVEN

(continued)

A love supreme, higher than mortal loves,  
A love that lifts its head among the angels,  
A love that crowns me with a crown of stars  
And everlasting laurel, that shall make  
My name immortal, and shall fix us twain  
Spirit to spirit, face to face forever  
In the world's memory—such is Dante's  
love. . . .

Yet, oh, my lover, I was woman once,  
And neither Paradise nor that love of thine  
Can make my ghost of womanhood forget  
Those needle-roughened finger-tips of hers—  
The little greedy mouth upon her breast.

UNPUNISHED?

HE walks at liberty the public streets.  
The law has weighed his deed and let him  
go,  
And yet—is he quite scathless when he  
meets  
The men and women whom he used to  
know?  
Is there no sting in the averted gaze  
Of those among whom he has broken bread,  
Or in the furtive glances that appraise  
The dull dishonored silver of his head?  
Cheered by such comradeship as he can buy  
He goes his way that daily grows more dim,  
Trusted by none, with none that he can  
trust.  
I wonder if he never with a sigh  
Confronts the years that gape ahead of him  
And wishes that the verdict had been just.

## GOD'S CHALLENGE

THE story we have written on the past  
Is neither to forget nor to undo.  
Our memories must walk until the last  
A barrier and a bond between us two;  
But wrong beyond the wrong that we have  
done  
Would be to sap the strength of coming  
years  
With shame that makes a darkness of the  
sun—  
To fade the web of life with futile tears.

WE sinned against the world—then ours to  
give  
The world a service greater than our sin,  
An understanding love for all who live  
That could not be, except for what has  
been.



GOD'S CHALLENGE (continued)

Thank God for His high challenge ! It shall  
bring

Grapes from our thorns, and from our bitter  
well

Sweet waters for the strength and comforting

Of those who walk in safety where we fell.

## TWO SONGS

## I

**D**EAR, we have kissed and laughed between  
the kisses;  
Our lips have met upon the salt of tears.  
We have remembered—while our paths  
were parted,  
Love held a hand of each along the years.  
But sweeter even than the kiss you gave me,  
More child than lover, scarce aroused from  
sleep,  
Was that your eyes implored and mine re-  
fused you  
That something better might be ours to  
keep.

## 2

**I** WILL give you jewels of the sunrise  
And webs of twilight for your soul to wear,  
Words of wonder for the spring's wild beauty,  
The will to venture and the strength to bear,  
I will light white fire upon your altar.  
You to me only one gift shall make—  
An alabaster box of precious fragrance  
That your own hands must break.

## WINDFLOWERS

WINDFLOWERS have blossomed in the  
bare brown woods.

Rosy-white, frail, they are quivering to  
the air

That is pure and cold like a young girl's  
dreams.

Summer will come, and serpents in the  
brush;

Autumn's clinging mists and the sadness  
of dead leaves;

Winter's hard beauty and desolate white  
peace;

Over and over, year after year. . . .

And always, thank God, each year will  
bring a day

When windflowers blossom in the bare  
brown woods.

## BARBE VERRUE

**B**ARBE VERRUE, troubadouresse  
Of the pleasant land of France,  
Far and wide I roamed to bless  
Hill and valley with romance.  
Many a lord of high estate  
Would have won me for his mate,  
Many a squire of low degree  
Would have shared his crust with me,  
For the singer's piercing art  
Cleaves the doublet, finds the heart—  
If their blood ran red or blue,  
Men were men, to Barbe Verrue.  
But I turned from every plea  
Choosing rather to be free.  
Oh, the merry life I had  
In my journeys up and down,  
Town to tower and tower to town,  
Making honest people glad!

BARBE VERRUE (continued)

Daughter of the science gay,  
I am paid for service true  
By the simple souls who pray  
For the peace of Barbe Verrue.

ROMANCE

THE sweet spring woods—a clouded moon  
—and youth. . . .

And the eternal truth  
Of all the sweet sad throbbing songs of old,  
Of all the tales the troubadours have told.  
This boy with proud bent head, this grave  
shy girl

Whose rapt face takes the moonlight like a  
pearl,

Are not themselves alone.

How many feet in theirs this path has  
known!

This is the garden of old Capulet,  
The tryst of Aucassin and Nicolette,—  
Those wide mysterious eyes  
Drew Dante's wandering soul to Paradise,  
Mirrored the hungry flames of ruined Troy  
And made the years of servitude a joy

ROMANCE (continued)

To Rachel's shepherd. By the tawny Nile  
Antony sold the world for that swift smile.  
On that strong breast Francesca fearless  
died.

So shone the Swan-Knight to his rescued  
bride.

They pass into the dusk . . . so met and  
clung

Those lips in Eden, when the world was  
young.

## UNDER THE FIG TREE

"Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."

Nathanael answered, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God."

**H**OW still it is! In such an hour as this  
Of twilight silence, one might hear the  
steps

Of Destiny draw near across the world—

Only it is not so great moments come.

We do not hear their tread; we sit at meat,

Perhaps, among our friends—perhaps at  
work

Among the little pleasant common things

That make what we call life—when all at  
once

We lift our eyes and in the open door

We see Fate standing. And we do not rise,

It may be, from the table—nor let fall

The tool that we are using—but we know

That we shall never be the same again.



UNDER THE FIG TREE (continued)

Why should those words be terrible?

To change—

Is it because upon all change there lies  
The shadow of the great, the final change?  
Each outgrown living is a little death.  
I think that is the reason why I love  
Well-trodden paths, familiar friendly scenes,  
Trees that, like this, I know from early  
green

To winter bareness. I would bar my door  
Forever, if I might, against all change. . . .  
So men grow cowards. Will there come a  
day

My love of custom will be fear of change,  
My love of life shrivel to fear of death?  
Unless a thing can grow, it must decay.  
Shall I be stiff of fiber, dim of sight,  
Impatient of all vision that exceeds  
My own, hard even in my kindliness?  
I have known such men and judged them  
not too gently;  
But somehow it is clear to me to-night,  
Perhaps they only loved the known too well.

## UNDER THE FIG TREE (continued)

If there could rise a prophet to proclaim  
All life is one, here and beyond the  
grave—

There is no change, only increase of  
light

Upon the things we know! If that  
might be—

Would I have ears to hearken and a heart  
To understand? And would I dare to face  
Living and dying and what lies beyond  
As a supreme adventure, caring nothing  
What might befall me, if I could but see  
That growing light? Or would I turn  
away. . . .

Is it too late? O God, be merciful  
To me, who may, although I have not sinned  
Grossly, as men call sin, be lost at last  
More than the broken sweepings of the  
street,

Good that is turned to ill, and knows it not!  
Strike me with thy flaming sword of love  
That cuts like wrath! Rend suddenly apart  
The veils of habit and long prejudice

UNDER THE FIG TREE (continued)

That make a twilight in my house of life!  
Jehovah, bid me live!

No angel comes—  
Only friend Philip hastening through the  
dusk.

Now I remember—he would have me go  
Hear some new teacher. . . . Philip is a  
man

Of swift and easy ardors for things new.  
Can any good come out of Nazareth?  
Yet I will go—rather than wound a friend.

## ON LATMOS

I CALLED him to the mountain, and he came.  
The valley drew him—ah, could I not see  
How slowly and reluctantly at first  
His feet were turned from the familiar ways?  
Until I stooped to him and put aside  
The dimness of his sight that hid my face;  
Then he came gladly, but with arms out-  
stretched,  
Hasting with quickened breath and burning  
eyes  
As man to woman. So I led him on  
A pace ahead, always a pace ahead  
And out of reach—and so he followed me.  
Now he is mine. His body lies asleep  
Lax as a child's, unmoving—but his soul. . . .  
His soul stands up as one who puts aside  
His garments at the games to run his course.  
So do I love thee best, Endymion!

## ON LATMOS (continued)

Clad in this cast-off garb, however fair,  
Thy kisses would have made of Artemis  
Only a woman. Now thou art a god,  
Bringer of beauty to the weary world,  
Making its darkness bright—even as I  
Among the stars, on earth Endymion.  
Ours is the commerce of immortal love—  
Hearts lifted and assuaged, the hand of wrong  
Palsied in act to strike, healing of pain  
And quickening of poverty to hope,  
Mercy in minds that knew it not, and joy  
In the dulled eyes of weepers—by these things  
Thou, godlike, dost attest thy love for me,  
A goddess, and thou feelest in thy strength  
My tenderness, and knowest me thine own.  
Yet thou wert born a man and not a god.  
Strange—had I left thee in the valley there  
Thou wouldst have stayed a shepherd, rising  
    slow  
With yawns and stretchings of unwilling limbs  
And eyes too heavy to behold the dawn,  
Until the fervid touch of eager noon  
Kindled thy blood to human passion. Nay,

## ON LATMOS (continued)

How had I borne to see thee dancing then  
Among the herd-girls, thrilled with sudden  
sight  
Of swaying arms and soft young bosoms,  
dazed  
By some warm gust of unexpected curls  
That blinds thee with soft fragrance, squan-  
dering  
Thy strength and youth and beauty in the  
arms  
Of what is of the earth, and shall endure  
No longer than the earth; to see thee grow  
Heavy of foot and gnarled of hand, a churl  
Deep drinking with the rest at harvest home,  
Taking to bed and board a docile mate  
To give thee food and children at the will  
Of thy gross, thoughtless body, and at last  
To see thee die, tired out, yet clinging still  
To that uncomely garment stained with use  
And shapeless grown with age and careless  
wear,—  
That garment men would call Endymion!  
Across the starry spaces comes to me

ON LATMOS (continued)

My liberated lover's cry of joy:

"This is the better way, my love!"—and yet  
That red mouth moves as to a woman's kiss.  
The languid arm grows tense, as if it clasped  
To the strong breast quick-shaken with a sigh  
The herd-girl's yielding laughter, and the hand  
Curves as about a little hand that steals  
Home to its palm—a clinging childish  
hand. . . .

Sleep, body, sleep! Art thou Endymion?

Endymion is a god and far away.

Poor shell of clay, what right hast thou to  
dream

Dreams of the valley when thy soul is gone?

Hast thou indeed a life that is thine own?

Nay, hast thou rights as well? I pity thee—

For my Endymion shall not taste of death.

The measureless eternities are his

Wherein to spend his ever-crescent power.

His beauty grows forever with the still

Immortal growth of the unhastening gods

Who smile to see the worlds drop into dust

Knowing what is to come. But what of thee,

## ON LATMOS (continued)

Endymion the mortal? Thou must grow  
Less beautiful, not more, as year by year  
Binds leaden sandals on thy dragging feet.  
The vision that beholds what men call Time  
A little dancing mote which quivers down  
Among a thousand others through a beam  
Of light supernal, to be lost in dark—  
That vision is the god's, and without end  
His time for loving, as his power for love  
Without a limit. Ah, but what of thee,  
Endymion the mortal? Thou canst love  
Only a little, and a little while,  
And in one little, unexpanding way.  
Earth bounds thee, as it holds thee at the last,  
And if thou go unfruitful to the dust,  
That is thine end. There trembles on my lips  
The smile that is the weeping of the gods  
To think how eagerly thy arms went out  
To clasp me, Artemis, a pace ahead,  
Always a pace ahead and out of reach.  
Poor fool, can mortal arms take Artemis?  
Haply didst even think to have of me  
The comfort of the hearth, and hear my voice



## ON LATMOS (continued)

From lips like thine call "Father" at thy  
knees—

And I have given thee nothing but long sleep  
Disquieted with dreams.

The world is still—

The heavens wheel about me where I stand  
Poised between earth and sky. From far away  
It seems that I can hear the sleepless hearts  
Of all the cheated dreamers of the world.

The hearts who found the perfect love too late  
To clasp and hold it close—those sadder  
hearts

Who thought to realize transcendently  
Body and soul, to prison Artemis  
A bride—and fared as thou, Endymion  
The mortal. Bitter waste of dreams and tears!  
Their eyes are calm with seeing overmuch,  
Those stars—but I, since I am of the gods,  
I grieve in vision for the pains of men.  
Such waste of dreams and tears—and yet—  
and yet

Is it all waste? Blessed indeed is he

ON LATMOS (continued)

Who deems that he has seen God face to  
face.

Whether the dream be very truth or not,  
Blessed is he if it be truth for him.

The heart that found the perfect love too  
late—

Perchance had love been free to clasp and hold  
It had proved less than perfect. Now that  
heart

Goes glorious, having seen divinity  
Unveiled, a hallowed creature through the  
years.

And thou, my sleeper—for I call thee mine  
Although thy dreams have never known my  
face,

What shall I do? Shall I awake thee now,  
Or shall I hold thee here with poppies bound  
Shut from thine earth, thine only heritage,  
Leaving my lover free to range the stars?

Standest thou here, Endymion the god,  
With sad sweet eyes upon me? Thou hast  
read

## ON LATMOS (continued)

My thought while still I locked it in my heart  
Reluctant to release it. O my love,  
Zeus is our father—where he giveth life  
Shall we give death? Take unto thee again  
Thy cast-off garment—stooping from the god  
Endue thee with thy body. Go once more  
Unto the valley, to the flocks and herds,  
The rustic festival, the hearth at night.  
Walk clothed among mankind, Endymion,  
Thou who hast run with Artemis free-limbed  
Upon the heights of heaven. Live out thy  
life—

The things of earth cannot ignobly come  
Ever again, my lover, unto thee.  
And for the sake of her, the child of Zeus  
Who gave thee godhood, thou shalt tenderly  
Cherish and reverence her whom thou dost  
choose

To be thy wife, and thou shalt carry forth  
Thy children to behold me in the sky,  
And teach them little songs of Artemis.  
Thine earthly vesture shall conform itself  
To thy true body's beauty, till at last

ON LATMOS (continued)

It fall from thee, thou hardly knowest how  
Nor carest, and thou face me once again  
Upon these heights, my lover and my god—  
The truer god because the truer man.

I bid thee no farewell, Endymion.

GIFTS

MANY have given me songs,  
Others have given me power,  
Joy like a cleaving sword,  
Pain like a rain-sweet flower,  
Vision of worlds unfound,  
Dreams that burn in the breast.  
With a smile in your quiet eyes  
You give me—rest.

FRIENDS have clasped my hand,  
Lovers my lips have kissed,  
Priests have lifted my soul  
As the incense rises in mist,  
Prophets have called me like trumpets  
Where the work of the world is done.  
You open the door of my heart  
To God's dear sun.



## THE PIXY

"And out of darkness came the Hands  
That reach through nature, moulding men."

It is believed in Cornwall, especially in the wilder and more remote districts, that the pixies sometimes put their offspring secretly in the place of human children, that such changelings may learn the secrets of humanity and bring back the knowledge to their people. It is quite possible that a pixy changeling might live unchallenged in a mortal community till recalled by the pixy people. Midsummer Night, it hardly need be repeated, is the one time of the year when the two worlds merge. The action of this story, therefore, takes place always at that time.

#### PEOPLE OF THE STORY

UNCLE SAUNDRY, an old man

WILL TREGINE, a young farmer

HUGH PENWARDEN, a young fisherman

MARGARET

THE PIXY, known humanly as LYLIARD

YOUNG HUEY



PART I

THE PIXY

We see a wooded cliff on the Cornish Coast. At the right stands a newly built cottage which evidently has never yet been occupied. There is a bridal suggestion in the clumsy tenderness with which flowers have been planted about the door. There is a narrow gap between the cottage and the thicket, where the blue of the deep sea is visible. Will Tregine is filling in the ground about the roots of a sapling that he has just planted before the cottage. Uncle Saundry stands directing the operation; both men are leaning against a strong wind from the sea.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

So—stay her well and pack her sound.  
She'll stand if once she grips the ground.

WILL

A stormy day you chose for her!

UNCLE SAUNDRY

The little people are all astir  
In the rustle of leaves and the splash of the  
  spray.  
How else could it be upon Midsummer Day?  
She will be

A lucky tree,  
For I dug her from Saint Leven's green.

WILL (laughing)

You pointed and I dug, you mean.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

She'll prosper those that here shall bide,  
Hugh and Margaret, groom and bride,  
And many little ones beside.  
There'll be no pixy-pranks to fear,  
No changeling in the cradle here!  
This tree will guard the house like Vicar's blessing.

WILL

Why should the need for such a shield be pressing?  
Is it for malice, nothing more,  
That pixies vex poor mortals so?  
There's little of the fairy-lore  
You do not know.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Aye, you do well to learn of me,  
Not join the fools who nowadays  
Flout all they are too blind to see.

I know the hidden people's ways.  
Hugh says there are no pixies—pooh!  
Nor spriggans neither. Clever Hugh—  
He might be wiser and sadder too  
But for this guarding tree.  
Malice? They have no more of spite  
Than winds and waters, day and night—  
Or so my grandsir told it me.  
But curious, as all wild things are,  
They wonder at the ways of men  
Who live and die and live again  
As we may wonder at a star.  
For they are kin to all the elements—  
Earth, water, air and fire they know full well—  
But of one word they never learned the sense.  
What is a soul, not one of them could tell.  
This is the secret, which to know  
Into the world they go  
As changelings, there to live and grow  
Like women and like men  
Till their own people call them back again.

WILL

And have they not yet learned it?  
Such patience should have earned it!

Here's Hugh! We got your gift in place  
Just in good time.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

That is no bridal face—

(Hugh enters from the wood, troubled and brooding,  
so absorbed in his own gloomy thoughts that he does not  
see them.)

He's pixy-led. This is no lucky day  
To walk the woodland all alone, that way.  
(He sings.)

Midsummer Day, Midsummer Day,  
That is the time when the pixies are gay.  
Midsummer Night, Midsummer Night,  
That is the season of fairy delight—

HUGH (interrupting harshly)

So Lyliard learned that song from you!  
You might have better business  
Than giddyng her featherbrain  
With fairy tales and fancies vain—

WILL

Come, come! You show us something less  
Than gratitude. See, Hugh,  
Here's Uncle's wedding-gift.

HUGH

A tree—

Why, that's a kindly thought; and it will grow  
As love should grow—and shall, God prosper  
me.

Forgive me for my hasty speech and rude.  
This last day's waiting shakes my fortitude.  
I'm not myself.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

That's natural, I know.

HUGH

I thank you—aye, and so shall Margaret too,  
And many a summer may it shelter you  
Smoking your pipe beside our cottage door.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Aye, for I'm human. Pixy-folk and such  
Will be afraid  
To let its slender shade  
Fall on them—and its leaves they dare not touch.  
A holy tree—it rooted in the sod  
Of the green path the good Saint Leven trod.  
I have known my years threescore  
And ten—I do not ask for more;

Yet I would plant its mate before I go  
For you and Lyliard, Will. Be not afraid  
For all they call her changeling, pixy-maid.  
Lasses were made for wooing, lad—make haste,  
For neither youth nor age has time to waste.  
When cherries ripen is the hour to taste.  
I warrant you she will not answer no.

HUGH

Poor Will—why give him such a stormy part?  
He loves a quiet life.  
Better to take the northeast gale to heart  
Than Lyliard for a wife.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

I know the talk—she's wild and cold, they say,  
As yonder spindrift gray.  
Never heed them, Will—she is not so.  
Young eyes often see less clear than old.

WILL (waves a hearty farewell as the old man goes away).

Wise Uncle! She is neither wild nor cold,  
But pure and strong as the shoreward air  
Salt from leagues of open sea.

HUGH

Did I not say the northeast gale  
That snaps the mast and splits the sail?  
Poor Uncle Saundry's wits are doited fair  
To bid you mated with the tempest be.

WILL

Pure and strong, and the heart behind  
Those clear eyes would be wondrous kind  
Could one but win her to his mind.

HUGH

She seems not so to me.  
Rather like fleeting fires of storm  
That flicker through the thunder-hill—  
The lightning-flame that cannot warm  
But only . . . kill.  
Well, we have always quarreled, she and I.  
I never liked her—who knows why?  
And for herself, she bears me scant goodwill.  
Like flint and steel we two have always clashed  
And from our smitten tempers, anger flashed.  
I never saw her but in stormy mood;  
To Margaret she seems another being,  
But Margaret's eyes were only made for seeing  
Things that are beautiful and sweet and good.

Our childhood as it slipped away  
Disclosed our later love begun—  
Calm as the dawning of the day,  
Sure as the rising of the sun.  
Our feet were made in tune to tread  
The long, long road of flowers and dust.  
Ere we were born, we two were wed—  
Mine was her love and hers my trust.  
Dear hearth to-morrow sets aglow  
Our dwelling's constant heart to be,  
Our love shall comfort even so  
My home in her and hers in me.  
Need calls me out upon the deep  
Where gulls wheel wild and billows comb.  
Whatever perils round me sweep,  
This holy light shall draw me home.  
Yes, from the very arms of death,  
From any storm by sea or land,  
My breath would answer Margaret's breath,  
My hand would grope for Margaret's hand.

WILL

It must make all the difference to know  
Some one is waiting you at home, her gaze  
Upon the road, thinking your pace too slow



After a day apart. Why, I could fare  
So gladly home, were such a welcome there—  
While now I plod my dull accustomed ways  
And lift my lonely latch with none to care  
Because there's nowhere else for me to go.  
Were Lyliard waiting me at close of day—

HUGH

The Pixy by a hearth, a cradle? Nay!

WILL

Why not?

HUGH

The pixy-folk, old women say,  
Lure wayfarers to flounder lost in mire  
By taking on the semblance of a fire  
Shining through cottage windows in the night.  
The poor fool hastens toward the cheering light  
And plumps into a bog, where he may wallow  
Cursing his luck till morning. Do you follow  
My parable?

WILL (laughing good-humoredly)

Oh, yes—I understand!

For you there is no woman in the land  
But Margaret. All the rest to earth you beat

That she may have a carpet for her feet.  
You pay her not her due unless you dare  
Admit that other maidens too are fair.

HUGH

What do you mean by dare not?

WILL

Poor lad! You will be quieter to-morrow.

HUGH

Mock as you will, I care not.

WILL

Indeed I mock not when I bid you borrow

(sings)

A sturdy coat of badger-skin  
To wrap your ticklish temper in.  
Every man's touchy, so they say,  
Just before his wedding-day.  
His freedom he must kiss good-by  
And turn her from the door.  
He dare not even roll his eye  
In ways he walked before—

Come, come! You will not frown at an old friend  
For a silly song? I'm envious, that's all,  
Wishing that I might hear the welcoming call

Of wife and little ones at labor's end.  
Now if the good Lord prosper me,  
Uncle shall plant another tree  
When this year's earning safe in store is laid—  
But you must set your sinew to that spade!  
This thought was Uncle's, fair and fine,  
But all the sweat was mine.  
Do you as well for me when comes my day!

HUGH (as the village clock strikes twelve in the distance)

Hark—that is noon.

Margaret will be here soon.

WILL

Margaret's to meet you here? Then I'm away.  
Do you as well for me when comes my day!

(When he is gone, Hugh stands for a moment looking out to sea, then, squaring his shoulders resolutely as if to throw off an incubus, he goes to the cottage. One of the plants beside the door is drooping for lack of a stake. He takes out his knife, cuts a twig from one of the bushes of the thicket, and begins trimming and pointing it. As he does so, he begins to whistle "Midsummer Day," but stops annoyed as he realizes it.)

HUGH

I'm pixy-led—I mean, my mind's astray.  
Plague on the tune, it flickered through my  
thought  
Like summer lightning—

(he breaks the stick, throws it down and angrily pockets his knife)

I am good for naught.  
Every man's touchy, so they say,  
Just before his wedding-day.  
His freedom he must kiss good-by. . . .  
Plague on Will Tregine, and on the dry  
Musty intolerable jape  
From which some idiot must always scrape  
The same old music when a man is wed!  
Freedom—would I be free from Margaret?  
Such freedom would be hell. If she were dead  
I would be hers—I never could forget.  
Only to think of her brings back my calm.  
Her name upon my lips is holy balm—  
Margaret—Margaret—Margaret—  
Here she will train about the door  
Sweet hardy roses, and her hand  
Will coax up flowers where before  
Was only barren sand.  
Her pathway shall with box be set  
To make the dewy twilight sweet,  
And gilliflowers and mignonette  
Shall cluster at her feet

With heartsease for her bosom white  
To match the heartsease in her eyes—

(Suddenly, in the wood, there is heard a song. The voice of the singer has an unhuman quality in its beauty, like the voice of a bird or of a young boy.)

Give me the red of the day  
For a kirtle gay!  
Give me the lightning to wear  
For a snood in my hair!  
Ribbons and laces are maiden's array,  
But I must have fire to be fair.

(Hugh has stood rigid, listening. As the slight figure of the Pixy, in a scarlet gown, appears from the wood, he turns and is about to go, but she runs across and intercepts him.)

HUGH

Lyliard—

THE PIXY

Why do you run away?  
I will not eat you.

HUGH

How did you happen to come this way?

THE PIXY

Thinking to meet you.

HUGH

What can you have to say to me?

THE PIXY

Only well-wishing.  
To-morrow drops net in a deep new sea—  
Good luck to your fishing!

HUGH

On no new ocean I embark to-morrow;  
I sail a coast well charted.  
Together we have proven joy and sorrow.  
I know her golden-hearted.  
Life is a simple thing if we but live it  
In faithfulness and duty,  
And should I wrong her, may not God forgive it  
Unto my soul—

THE PIXY (interrupting with strange quiet intensity)  
We walked along the shore, one day,  
And you and Margaret walked behind.  
“I love you, dear,” I heard you say,  
“With all my heart, with all my mind,  
“With all my soul. . . .”

HUGH

You were with Will Tregine, yet you could hear  
What I was saying? Is my voice so clear?

THE PIXY

You spoke a word that meant more to my ear  
Than any that he uttered. Is the whole

Of what you call a soul  
In love of man and woman?

HUGH

Things like that  
I leave alone. Souls are the vicar's trade.

THE PIXY

He? He knows as little as his cat—  
Less, maybe. Why, he's weakly and afraid  
And old as Uncle Saundry. Neither one  
Could stare with open eyes against the sun.  
Surely a soul is beautiful and strong.

HUGH

Ask Will Tregine. He would not tell you wrong.

THE PIXY

He . . . frightens me. It is to you I turn.  
Why do you look away?

HUGH

Your eyes—they burn. . . .

THE PIXY (with an impish return to her song)

Give me the lightning to wear  
For a snood in my hair!  
Ribbons and laces are maiden's array,

But I must have fire—  
Why have you called me all the morning  
through?

HUGH

I have not called you.

THE PIXY

Ask your friend the vicar  
If it be not a sin to speak untrue.  
Look how the lightnings flicker  
In that great cloud-bank—but no rain to-mor-  
row!

HUGH

I had not even thought of you.

THE PIXY

Oh, sorrow,  
I'm growing deaf. 'Twas not your voice at all?  
But I called you. Did you not hear me call?

HUGH

No.

THE PIXY

Not a whisper?

HUGH

No, I say.



THE PIXY

Did you not feel a stinging drive of spray  
Salt on your cheek? The wind's wild fingers  
strong

Twisted among your hair? Did you not long  
To cleave the water like a straight white dart  
And swim forever? Had you not at heart  
A sudden sickness for the open sky?  
Lay not the roof upon you like a shroud?  
Did you not long to ride a flying cloud  
And pluck the stars like blossoms? That was  
I. . . .

HUGH (shaken, with an effort at mockery)

Pixy!

THE PIXY

Aye, turn your coat with speed  
Before a spell be cast on you.  
Who was it said he did not heed  
These stories of the pixy-breed?  
Not one of them is true, said he—  
Wise man was he! Who could it be?  
Not one of them is true!

HUGH

If Will Tregine could see you now  
He too would vow

You are more kin to wild things of the wood  
Than to the womankind men woo and wed.

THE PIXY

What do you mean?

HUGH

He said

You are so gentle and so good!

THE PIXY

Something in him I never understood. . . .  
Something in me he cannot understand. . . .

HUGH (harshly, as if in spite of himself)

Tell me—do you love Will Tregine?

THE PIXY

You would be glad?

HUGH

I? Bah—it's no concern of mine  
Except that he's an honest lad  
Worthy a woman's best.

THE PIXY

You think

I'd give him—what? Your meaning?

HUGH

None.

THE PIXY

Look at me, Hugh—why do you blink  
As if you looked against the sun?

(Breathing hard like a spent runner, he makes an involuntary movement toward her, but she whirls away lightly as a wind-blown leaf, singing as she dances.)

Midsummer Day, Midsummer Day,  
That is the time when the pixies are gay.  
Midsummer Night, Midsummer Night,  
That is—

(a pirouette brings her face to face with Uncle Saundry's tree, her foot almost touching its shadow on the ground. She stops short)

Where did you get that tree? Since yesterday  
It was put here.

HUGH

Why, any one would say  
The nickname we have given you  
Is not a jest, but true!  
Thanks to Saint Leven, it's a holy tree—

THE PIXY

Then if I be  
A pixy, I must walk around—  
Like this—its shadow on the ground.

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## HEARTS AWAKE

---

(She does so with a pretty burlesque of caution, then, with a triumphant ripple of laughter, dashes for the window of the cottage.)

Let me look in!

HUGH (stopping her)

Not before she comes—no.

THE PIXY

What harm is in my glance, to fear it so?

HUGH

The house is hers and hers the earliest sight.  
That is her right.

THE PIXY

Have it your own way, then.  
Curious things are men!  
If Will Tregine had built a house for me,  
Would he make Margaret wait till I could see?

HUGH

How much you speak of him! Ah, yes, some day  
He'll win you.

THE PIXY

No—

HUGH

Why do you turn away?  
Look you at me. . . .

God, but you're beautiful, you pixy-sprite!  
How do you talk to Will Tregine?

THE PIXY

Ask him—that is fair.

HUGH

Do you gaze him drunk with your eyes' dark  
wine?

THE PIXY

Ask him—if you care.

HUGH

Do you smile him mad with your scarlet lips,  
Do you pluck at his heart with your finger-tips  
And drown his soul in the dusk of your hair?

THE PIXY

Ask him—if you dare.

HUGH

That's once too often for a man to bear,  
You lovely devil—does he kiss you so?

(Eagerly she yields to his arms and raises her lips to his; but after a moment she holds his face a little from her, studying it with a wistful perplexity that has no passion in it.)

THE PIXY

Here's nothing I need take such pains to know.  
I knew long, long ago

That man to woman turns  
As surely as water drenches, as fire burns  
Or as the small resistless grasses grow.  
I thought that love was greater far than this—  
Or is it something I must always miss?  
Would Margaret have found it in that kiss?

HUGH (abruptly releasing her)

Margaret! Oh, God!

THE PIXY

What ails you?

HUGH

Shame.

Bitter to my soiled lips is now her name—  
How shall I meet her quiet smile  
Clean as I was an hour ago?  
What shall my sickened heart beguile  
To forget its overthrow?  
Eternal truth how can I swear  
Whose lips are blackened by a lie?  
Her constancy how can I bear  
Knowing well how false am I?

THE PIXY

Then that was love, as you love her?

HUGH

No, no!

Madness, an evil dream! And yet . . . and  
yet . . .

THE PIXY

There is—a thing beyond—that's closed to me.  
Still to go seeking, when I thought at last  
I had the secret! Well—if it must be. . . .  
Hugh, do not grieve so. What is past is past—  
You only need forget.

HUGH

Can you—forget?

THE PIXY

Why not? You plucked a fruit upon the wall  
When you were hungry. What is there to blame?

HUGH

It was no more that led to Adam's fall  
And barred the gate of Paradise with flame.  
I was so strong—so happy—till you came!

THE PIXY

You will be so again when I'm away.

HUGH

You are going? Yes—O God, I pray, I pray  
That I may never see your face again!

THE PIXY

I wish I knew Him.

HUGH

Who?

THE PIXY

The One whose name

Men use so much. You speak it not the way  
The vicar does—not coldly—yet it seems  
Hardly as if you named one real to you,  
A friend. I feel that He could make my dreams  
Come true  
If I could ever find Him.

HUGH

Lyliard,

Where will you go?  
No—no—I must not know—

THE PIXY

What I seek I'll find or miss  
In other towns as well as this.  
Farewell, Hugh.

(She leaves him without a backward glance.)

HUGH

Lyliard! Is it all a dream?  
Could I but wake and find it so—



Life as it was an hour ago!  
I never saw the wild sweet gleam  
Of those dark eyes—she never came  
Out of the shadow, young Desire  
On flickering feet as light as flame—  
Never my arms—she told me to forget,  
Who gave me back my kiss when our lips met!  
My heart is like a house gutted with fire.  
Margaret—Margaret!  
I dare not think of what before was bliss. . . .  
She will train about the door  
Sweet hardy roses, and her hand  
Will coax up flowers from the sand,  
But heartsease—nevermore.  
Why, this is folly. What's a kiss?  
Nothing to cause so much ado.  
Men steal them under the mistletoe  
For all to see, and laughing too.  
And yet, I know  
There was no laughter in my heart—for  
this. . . .

(He has flung himself down on the step of the cottage, and hides his face in his arms. Margaret enters, and stooping over him lays her hand on his shoulder.)

MARGARET

Why, what's amiss, dear lad?

HUGH

Myself. I hate  
Myself, unworthy of your purity,  
Your tenderness. Before it is too late,  
Beloved, dare you give yourself to me?

MARGARET (seating herself beside him, her soothing  
hand still on his shoulder)

It is too late to take again  
My gift that is not of to-day.  
Children at play, I loved you then  
As I shall love you when we're gray.  
'Tis not to-morrow makes me yours;  
Yours I have been these many years.

HUGH

Margaret, such a love endures  
Though all our world stream down in tears.  
And yet I am not fit to kiss  
Your slender footprints in the dust.

MARGARET

Dear boy of mine, what folly's this?  
Love requites love, trust answers trust.  
No chaffering between us two,  
No merchant's talk of more and less!  
All that I am is one with you  
In faith and joy and tenderness.

HUGH

Give me the clearness of your eyes  
That I may see myself therein!

MARGARET

Ah, now my dear again is wise!

HUGH

The man you love can never sin  
Against his image in your heart,  
Never fall short of your belief.  
Yours, Margaret, in joy and grief—  
Yours, Margaret, till death shall part.

MARGARET

Now like your very self you seem.

HUGH

In your dear eyes myself I see.  
Alone, I had an evil dream  
From which your coming wakened me.  
See, here the house that waits for you  
To make it home.

(They rise together, his arm about her.)

MARGARET

You builded it.

HUGH

And it shall see our dreams come true.

MARGARET

To-morrow—

HUGH

When the fire is lit. . . .

And you shall train about the door  
Sweet hardy roses, and your hand  
Shall coax up flowers from the sand,  
And heartsease—heartsease . . .

(involuntarily his eyes turn back to the wood, and his voice catches almost in a sob, as if he still saw the Pixy flame-like against the green. Then, with a deep breath and a resolute lift of his head, he goes on firmly)

And heartease for your bosom white  
To match the heartsease in your eyes.

(He opens the cottage door and they go in together.)

PART II

A year later. We see the interior of the cottage. It is simple and sparsely furnished, but clearly the home of people who love it and each other. At the right is a door, leading to the bedroom. At the left, the hearth, beside which stands a cradle. At the back, between two latticed windows, through one of which we see Uncle Saundry's little tree, is the house-door. Just outside, in the warm sunset light, Uncle stands with Will, who is looking out to sea through a spy-glass.

WILL

Aye—yonder is his sail beyond a doubt.  
There's the black M he set against the white  
That Margaret might single out  
His boat from all the rest in sight.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

That is glad news.

WILL (entering the house and hanging the spyglass in  
its place)

And yet how otherwise  
It might have been. With what affrighted eyes  
Might we have seen his homing sail to-day,

Had things gone ill with her, and he away.  
I think he would have died upon her grave  
If he had found her dead—and yet he went  
Thinking her sickness safely past, content  
And happy in his new-born son, and brave  
To win the living silver of the wave  
That they might prosper. Strange we never  
hear  
A warning whisper—DANGER DRAWETH  
NEAR—  
GO NOT FROM HOME! He scarce was out  
of sight  
When she was stricken.

## UNCLE SAUNDRY

Aye—that very night.  
There's not a doubt that but for Lyliard's care  
She would have died. How speeds your wooing  
there?  
Maids flee to see if men will chase—  
You followed when she set the pace.  
Your feet have worn the herbage down  
Between Tregartha and our town,  
Until you brought her back again.  
Truth, lad—out with it then!

Came she in answer more to Margaret's needing  
Or to your pleading?

WILL

Uncle, let the matter be.  
Jesting time is past for me.  
Every day I've seen her here  
Has made her twenty times as dear.  
Now I can no longer tarry—  
It must be farewell or marry.  
If she bids me, I will go—  
But I can no longer bear  
Uncertainty. Too much I care  
Whether the word be yes or no.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Ask her boldly for her yes.  
Maids are tricky creatures—  
Love unsought they'll not confess  
By voices or by features.  
Put it to her blunt and strong—  
Bid her take or lose you.  
Mark me, she will not be long,  
And—she will not refuse you.

WILL

Hush!

---

## HEARTS AWAKE

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(The Pixy comes from the inner room, the sleeping baby in her arms, and lays it in the cradle. She is dressed in a soft dark wine-color, no longer the flaming figure of her first appearance, and it is as if a similar shadow had come over her whole person. She comes forward to greet them, smiling.)

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Lyliard, Hugh is on the way.  
And how's our Margaret to-day?

THE PIXY

Charming. All danger's left behind.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

You are a doctor to my mind.

THE PIXY

Herbs I have known since I was wee.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

When I fall sick, will you nurse me?

THE PIXY

I will indeed,  
But may we long await the need!

UNCLE SAUNDRY

And little Huey—do we dare  
To look at him?

THE PIXY

Take care!  
He is asleep.



UNCLE SAUNDRY

Ah—so you should be bending  
Over your own.

THE PIXY

There are some lacks that lie too deep for  
mending.  
I walk alone.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Aye—but not far. That is but girlish talking.  
Ere long, I know  
You'll choose a brave companion for your walk-  
ing.

(He goes out, closing the door behind him. The Pixy, still stooping over the cradle, does not realize that he has gone alone, and that Will is left leaning against the wall by the door, his arms folded, his eyes fixed on her. She sighs, as she answers the last speech.)

THE PIXY

Whither to go?  
Never to love, never to hate,  
Never to die, never to live,  
Only to watch and listen and wait  
For a thing that none will give.  
Never to hate, never to love,  
Never to live, never to die—

WILL

Why are you sad?

THE PIXY

I did not know you still were here.

WILL

You should be joyous, dear,  
If charity well done can make one glad.

THE PIXY

I am but less than sad and more than gay.  
'Tis like the twilight of a stormy day  
That clouds me now.

WILL

The twilight is the tenderest time of all,  
Calling the farmer from the busy plow  
Toward lighted windows, where the small  
Bright heads are waiting, round the fire,  
And with them his dear heart's desire,  
Their mother—

THE PIXY

But I did not know  
That what I did was charity.

WILL

Indeed  
It was, for you left all and came to her.

---

## HEARTS AWAKE

---

### THE PIXY

That is but nature's way, when there's a need  
To answer it.

### WILL

Life would be lovelier  
Did every heart so simply take  
The way of kindness. Would you show  
Such mercy for another's sake  
As you have shown for Margaret's?

### THE PIXY

Oh—

How can I tell unless I know  
The need that calls? It well may be  
A need beyond my power to fill  
Had I a thousand times the will.

### WILL

Beloved, will you marry me?

(There is a silence while she stands looking into his eyes, her hands clasped on her breast. When she speaks at last, there is a different note in her voice from any we have heard before.)

### THE PIXY

In my being then a silence broke,  
As if one stronger than all nature spoke  
A speech I hear but cannot understand.

Strange and sweet it sounds to me,  
Like unknown music from the land  
Heard by one adrift at sea.  
Nothing in nature speaks like this.  
Only man such thoughts can know  
And the soul that makes him man.  
If I should give you what I can,  
Would you be happier so?  
Say, will you have my mouth to kiss,  
My hands to make your daily bread,  
My breast to give your children ease?  
If thus your longing may be fed,  
Take me—but in wisdom wed  
And never ask for more than these.

WILL

You could more easily have said  
“I love you not,” and hurt me less.  
No, no—I meant you no reproach.  
It was my own wild clumsiness  
That warn me as you might, would press  
Its heavy-footed suit, encroach  
Upon your patience. Now farewell—  
I’ll trouble you no longer.

---

## HEARTS AWAKE

---

THE PIXY (impulsively detaining him as he turns away)

No—

You shall not leave me till I tell  
The truth of why I bid you go.  
What nature feels, that I can feel.  
The laws of earth my life control—  
But to my soul if you appeal,  
What can I say, who have no soul?  
I cannot love, I cannot hate,  
I cannot die, I cannot live  
As you know life. There is my fate,  
A changeling with no heart to give,  
That you would reckon worth the name—  
Yet how am I myself to blame  
That I am but a pixy?

WILL

Lyliard!

THE PIXY

Nay—

But hear me out. I bide with men  
Who knows how long? Perhaps to-day  
My people call me back again.

WILL

Child, child! And why not simply say  
“I do not love you—go your way”?

You shall be rid of me at last—  
I do not mean that peevishly,  
Forgive me if it sounded so.  
Tom Polgrain this whole year past  
Has tried to buy my farm of me.  
Now he shall have it. I will go  
And see what fortune has to show  
In other countries oversea.  
And always shall my blessing be upon you.  
Had I been man enough, I would have won you.  
My fault, not yours, that you have said me no.  
Do not be sorry for me—I have had  
So much to make me glad.  
Life has been different since my love began,  
And though I asked for more than you could  
give,  
What you have given, I lose not while I live.  
God bless you—keep you—love you . . . oh,  
my dear. . . .  
(He goes out quickly.)

THE PIXY

And I can only say—Farewell, good man.

(She presses her hand to her eyes, with a gesture of pain.)

That, I think, would be a tear

Were I a woman. Oh, the vain  
Blind uncomprehending pain  
Like the pang of quaking earth,  
The rending agony of birth!  
And he went in sorrow, fleeing  
Truth too simple for his seeing. . . .  
I fear—I fear!  
This strange thing has come too near.  
I have seen as through a screen  
What a soul may mean,  
And the knowledge moans in me  
Like the fretting of the sea.  
Why should my people strive to learn  
Of that which they may never gain?  
Peace we lose beyond return  
And all our profit is but pain.

(She goes to the door and looks out, the sunset red  
on her face.)

I will forget.

The sun will soon set

And with Midsummer dew will the grasses be  
wet.

Midsummer Day, Midsummer Day,  
That is the time when the pixies are gay.  
Midsummer Night, Midsummer Night,

That is the season of fairy delight.  
Naught could I give him that was worth his  
taking,  
Lacking the gift which is beyond my making.  
Had I a heart, I think it would be breaking.  
Midsummer Day is creeping away,  
The moon's peeping out so white, so white,  
And the stars by and by will come down from  
the sky  
To dance through the midsummer night.  
The stars will come down from the sky  
And the pixies come up from their caves—  
And look at the fireflies, the mortals will cry,  
And the glint of the moon on the waves!  
Drop me a star to wear  
In the dusk of my hair!  
Drop me a star to rest  
Like a rose on my breast,  
For in ribbons and flowers a maiden is dressed  
But I must have fire to be fair.

MARGARET (calls from the bedroom)

Pixy!

THE PIXY

Glad call, glad call!  
I would come home



To the stars that fall  
And the flying foam.  
Here I am less  
Than nothingness.  
Let me come home!

MARGARET (appears in the doorway)

Pixy, who's there?

THE PIXY (helping her to the armchair by the cradle)

No one is here  
But me, my dear.  
I was but singing while I swept.  
Oh, softly, softly! Have you grown so strong  
All in a moment? 'Tis the first you've stepped  
Out of your chamber.

MARGARET

Ready I must be  
To welcome back my man from sea.  
Will he not come to-day? He tarries long.

(She leans back in the chair with a smile)

I am weaker than I thought.

THE PIXY (with a nod toward the cradle)

That was not cheaply bought.

MARGARET (looking into the cradle)

Who but a mother understands  
The beauty of her babe asleep!  
See, Lyliard—see his little hands  
Like roseleaves in each other curled—  
Hands that shall strongly plunge and deep  
Into the treasures of the world.

THE PIXY

What would you have his manhood be?

MARGARET

Leave awhile to me  
My little babe to keep!

THE PIXY

It was yourself that spoke of days to be.

MARGARET

Somehow, in your voice it seemed  
I heard—eternity.

THE PIXY

You dreamed.

MARGARET

What would I not give to him!  
Strength of soul and strength of limb,  
Beauty of body and of mind,

A heart that is both brave and kind,  
The happiness of loyal friends  
And love, the joy that never ends.  
If only I knew magic well,  
I'd weave for him the pixy spell  
Of the elements four—  
Why do you shut the door?

(THE PIXY has moved swiftly across the room and closed the door. Now she returns and seats herself on the arm of Margaret's chair)

The sun has set—the pixy folk might hear.  
What charm is that of which you tell?

MARGARET (leaning her head on the Pixy's arm)  
Have you forgotten, dear?  
It was yourself who told me, in the days  
When first you came among us, and in jest  
We called you Pixy, for your elfin ways.  
How long ago that seems!

THE PIXY

How long! Lie back and rest  
Here on my bosom.

MARGARET

Once, beside the fire,  
Have you forgot? You said, His heart's desire

He cannot lack on whom this spell is wrought.  
You would not tell by whom you had been  
taught,

But I guessed Uncle Saundry. You recall?

THE PIXY

Yes, I remember all.

MARGARET

Earth to your eyes that you may see,  
Fire to your heart that you may feel,  
Water to your brow that you may know,  
Air to your lips that you may speak.

THE PIXY (laying her hand softly on Margaret's  
mouth)

Hush, hush! There danger lies. Let it alone.

MARGARET

Danger? A mind to which all things are  
known,

Eyes that see everything, a heart which feels  
And speech that never fails—the whole world  
kneels

Before the feet of such!

THE PIXY

But if the final touch  
Were lacking? If there came

Unforeseen, unplanned,  
Something to break the spell,  
And left the heart aflame,  
The eyes wide open—then  
The dazed bewildered mind  
That cannot understand  
All which it sees revealed—  
The lips forever sealed—  
Ah, better cold and blind!  
That would be what men  
Call hell.

MARGARET

Lyliard, Lyliard, you frighten me!

THE PIXY

Only a pixy such a power can wield,  
And if the spell should interrupted be  
Only one thing the broken charm can mend.  
A pixy to the elements must yield  
Her being wholly—with the magic, end.  
End.

And though their life may be of little worth,  
The pixy people cling to life and earth,  
Fearing the darkness there, beyond it all.

MARGARET

Now you recall  
More than you told me then.

THE PIXY

It came to me again.

(She makes a jest of it all, springing up from her seat)  
Try if you will the spell—but not with him!  
Look—have I kept your kitchen in good trim?

MARGARET

So brave a housewife! All is clear  
As a new moon, and while I was lying  
Flighty with fever, I could hear  
My pans and skillets calling and crying,  
Margaret, Margaret, come to us!  
Naughty ones, why did you vex me thus?  
You did not need me—  
And now that I have come you scarcely heed me,  
But to the Pixy turn your faces bright!  
Tell me, dear, when shall I see  
Your face by your own hearth-fire's light?

THE PIXY

Can you tell me?

(She goes quickly into the bedroom, closing the door  
behind her.)

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HEARTS AWAKE

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MARGARET (smiling with wise tenderness)

The longing for a woman's part  
Of life is crying in her heart.  
For every woman love is best—  
The wildest bird comes to the nest.

(The outer door is flung open and Hugh enters. When he sees Margaret he runs to her, and falling on his knees beside her clasps her in his arms. They are silent for a moment.)

HUGH

Margaret!

MARGARET

My boy, come back at last!  
Why, hush—my love, the danger's past.  
Daily I mend; there's naught to fear.  
Give Lyliard thanks for that.

HUGH

The Pixy—here?

MARGARET

She's there within.

HUGH

Thank her I will.  
They told me of her kindly care,  
But not that she was with you still.  
Later she shall claim her share  
Of gratitude,—but now—all else must wait

And let me look at you awhile.  
Give me the comfort of your smile,  
Your touch—ah, God! How desolate  
Without you all my life would be!  
Margaret, Margaret, stay with me!

(Again they are silent in a close embrace. There is a knock at the door. Hugh rises and opens it, and Will enters.)

HUGH

Welcome, Will.

WILL

Welcome to you,  
And welcome to your Margaret, too.  
'Tis good to see her sitting here  
In her own place  
With such a happy face.

HUGH

To think that danger came so near  
To her, and nothing called me back—  
No warning from the cloud's gray rack,  
No whisper from the sea.  
How shall I ever dare again to go  
Since you may have such bitter need of me  
And I not know?



MARGARET

By friendship was my need well met,  
Care that I never can forget,  
And tenderness beyond my speech.  
As God is never out of reach,  
His angels always are at hand  
In human shape, when comes His call.  
Will, could I make you understand  
All that we three must owe you—all—  
You who brought Lyliard to me!

HUGH (low, involuntarily)

So it was he. . . .

WILL

Tax not your slender gain of strength  
To thank me—say it all at length  
To her, and give me for my meed  
Your good wishes on my road.

HUGH

What do you mean? You leave us?

WILL

That riddle was not hard to read.

MARGARET

But why should you so grieve us?

WILL

Say that I have a roving will.  
That may be true, and where's the harm?  
I've made my bargain not so ill.  
Tom Polgrain has bought my farm,  
And now I'm free to roam my fill  
So my fortune I will try  
Wherever fortune seems to beckon.  
Save that I bid my friends good-by,  
Myself right lucky I may reckon.  
To-morrow morning I'm away.

HUGH (as if against his will)

Alone?

WILL

Alone.

MARGARET

But why this haste?

WILL

I've thought of it for many a day—  
Now that I am resolved, why waste  
More time?

MARGARET

You go in happiness?

WILL

How else?

MARGARET

And—hope?

WILL

The worth of that is less.

A man as he travels may buy  
Gladness with good he can do.  
Fear is a mote in the eye,  
Hope is a stone in the shoe,  
Galling the trudge of the day,  
Making him wish to be winging.  
Once he has cast it away,  
On he goes singing.  
And so, farewell.

MARGARET (taking the hand he holds out to her)

Farewell—oh Will, dear friend,  
Well may you fare!  
Come back to Cornwall at your wandering's end.  
Lyliard is there—  
Shall I not call her?

WILL

I have said  
All that I need to say to her—before.

HUGH

Will, remember that this door  
Stands evermore ajar for you.

WILL (as he passes out, looks back with a gallant smiling wave of the hand)

I will remember, Hugh.

MARGARET

Go with him—speed him on his way, poor lad.  
Brave as his words might be, his eyes were sad.  
Lyliard will help me get to bed.

(When Hugh has followed Will, she calls)

Pixy—

(The Pixy comes from the bedroom. Margaret takes her hands and looks up at her wistfully)

Dear Pixy—did this have to be?

THE PIXY

If I could love a man, it should be he.  
I am Grief's daughter. Where I touch, I wound.

MARGARET

Not me, dear heart, not me.  
You touched me but to heal.

---

## HEARTS AWAKE

---

THE PIXY

Perhaps I hurt you, but you were too sound  
And fine of heart to feel.  
Now that Hugh's here again, I'll go my way.

MARGARET

So soon?

THE PIXY

I've been here many and many a day.

MARGARET

Forgive me, dear, if I forget  
You have your own affairs to mind.  
Yourself the parting time shall set—  
But sometimes, Lyliard, look behind  
To those who love you, and who owe  
A debt that only love can pay.

(With a gesture toward the cradle)

Here is one who does not know  
He loves you, yet—and yet some day  
He too shall tell you so.

THE PIXY

What I have done for you is naught.  
I would that I might feel indeed  
That I had brought

---

## HEARTS AWAKE

---

Some gift beyond an answered need—  
Something that none but I could give.  
Come, Margaret, come! you are weary—get to  
bed.

(As she helps Margaret to rise, and they turn toward  
the bedroom, Margaret pauses by the cradle.)

### MARGARET

Yourself give to us while we live—  
And to him, when we are dead.

(They go into the bedroom. As the door closes behind  
them, Hugh appears in the outer doorway. He has evi-  
dently been standing outside, where it is now dark.)

### HUGH

Something has changed her—God! I dare not  
guess  
What it might be. . . .  
She would not marry Will. . . .  
Burns in her veins the longing bitterness  
That poisons me—  
The gnawing hunger that is never still?  
I dare not meet her—every hidden thought  
And every desperate dream of mine has  
wrought  
A mischief on my soul; my strength is straw—

Her voice speaking my name—her touch—  
would light

A flame to lay in ashes love and law  
And all things safe and beautiful and right.  
O God, be good to me and mine to-night  
And keep us from all evil!

What was there?

It sounded like the calling of a horn. . . .

(A faint, high, sweet note is heard, thrice repeated. It is an unearthly sound, almost beyond the scope of human hearing, yet strangely penetrating.)

Sweet as it was, it was not good to hear

This night of all the year.

Three times it blew. . . .

If I had not wit enough to scorn

The old wives' tales, I'd say the pixies drew

A changeling home.

(With a revulsion of feeling he turns to the door.)

Miserable, to linger here—although

My heart has sinned and sinned, I could not bear

The final sin that Margaret must know.

Though evil spirits fill the darkened air

And whisper in the leaves and in the foam,

It is another magic that I fear.

(He goes out into the dark. The Pixy enters from the bedroom, speaking back to Margaret as she comes.)

THE PIXY

Yes, I will bring him to you.

'Twas the call!

I will go home, I will forget it all.

I will be playmate of the stars again

And think no more about the world of men.

(She takes the baby from the cradle. Hugh's white face appears at the window, looking in, but she does not see.)

Poor little hands that fumble at my breast,

You are like all the rest

To whom I could not give the things they  
sought.

You hurt me, soft wee hands! If there were  
aught

Within my power to give you, sweet, before  
I go forever hence

Back to the elements—

The spell!

Dear Margaret, a moment more!

(She goes swiftly to the door and takes a handful of earth from the side opposite the window where Hugh is standing. With a small clod she touches the child's eyelids.)

Earth to the eyes that you may see.

(Returning to the hearth, she kneels beside it, lays bare the baby's breast and takes up a coal in her fingers.)



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## HEARTS AWAKE

---

Fire to the heart that you may feel.

(As she touches the baby's breast with the coal, Hugh rushes in, a branch of the holy Tree in his hand. He snatches the child from her and clasps it to his breast, holding out the leafy branch between them.)

HUGH

So here's the secret of my mad desire!

The cruel glory of the fire

Your sorcery lit in me was hell's own flame.

Oh, I have been to blame

Doubting that such dark miracles could be!

And was it not enough to ruin me

But you must work your magic on my son?

But he is saved, thanks to this holy Tree.

Out of this dwelling that you strove to blight

Back to the other devils of the night!

(She has shrunk back before him till she stands in the doorway.)

THE PIXY

You do not know the wrong that you have done.

(She vanishes into the outer darkness.)

## PART III

It is twenty years later. We see the cottage as in the first scene. Though it shows evidence of human habitation, there is everywhere the feeling of a return to wild nature. Uncle Saundry's sapling is now a strong young tree, and dominates the tangle of weeds and wild flowers about the door, where there is no longer any trace of a garden. A man comes along the overgrown path through the thicket slowly but not uncertainly, as one who retraces a familiar way after a long absence. It is Will Tregine. The years have ripened and expanded him. His hair is gray, but he is stronger and finer than in his youth. He knocks at the door. There is no answer. Smiling, he tries the latch; it yields, but he does not enter.)

## WILL

Ajar—just as they said that it would be.  
Margaret is on some errand in the town  
And Hugh, perhaps, at sea,  
His boy to help him. Well, I will sit down  
And wait. Strange, strange  
That twenty years should make no greater  
change  
When they have left so deep a mark on me.

Naught here that shows their passing but the  
tree—

UNCLE SAUNDRY (calling as he comes along the path)

Will! Will Tregine!

WILL (rising from the step to greet him)

That name is mine.

God bless you, Uncle Saundry! but it's fine

To see your face!

UNCLE SAUNDRY

I'll wager that you thought

I was long underground. Well—life is wrought

In curious patterns! Why should I be here

When younger folk with life's best years before  
them

Have grasses growing o'er them?

WILL

It is not youth gives living all its zest.

Sometimes the young are readiest to rest.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

I know.

(There is a pause)

---

WILL

Do Hugh and Margaret live here still?  
I thought it looked the same—but now I see  
A difference.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

That well might be.  
You've had no news then since you left us, Will?

WILL

At first, I waited for good news to send,  
And then I thought, letters are sorry stuff.  
I will go back to gossip friend with friend—  
Then we can laugh at when the road was rough;  
Things told are truer than things written. So  
The years went on.

UNCLE SAUNDRY (appraising his appearance)

You've prospered well enough.

WILL

As goods that sell in market go,  
I am neither rich nor poor.  
I am a farmer still  
On the green slope of a hill  
Beside the western sea.  
But the riches that endure

The years have brought to me.  
And Hugh and Margaret—does their son  
Follow his father's trade?

UNCLE SAUNDRY

The blunt way is the kindest one.  
Margaret and Hugh were laid  
In churchyard fifteen years ago.  
Hugh's boat was wrecked in a winter blow.  
She had been frail, and fading like spring snow—  
And when his body came ashore, she died.  
So they were buried side by side  
Both in one day.

WILL

And little Huey?

UNCLE SAUNDRY

He

Came home with me.

WILL

Hugh would be far happier that way,  
But Margaret must have wistful eyes  
Even in Paradise  
For the boy she left behind.  
And is he still with you?

UNCLE SAUNDRY

No—he lives here  
Alone.

WILL

Alone?

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Perhaps you can see clear  
Where I who stand too near  
Am blind.  
He always was a queer, uncanny child,  
Gentle enough, but shy and wild  
As a young fawn—yet one could see  
Nothing lacking in his mind.  
Hugh used to watch him anxiously  
As if he almost thought to find  
Something he feared—when Huey grew  
So strange, that all came back to me.  
He was wondrous quick at school,  
Yet in the things that any dunce  
Could understand, he seemed a fool.  
Sometimes I felt as if he knew  
So much it mazed him. All at once  
When he had turned fourteen, he fell  
Into a dumbness—not a word  
Has any of us heard

From him since then. There is a spell  
On him, I think. He's strong and well  
And handsome, too—but—thus it is!

WILL

You're sure he has no sickness?

UNCLE SAUNDRY

What's amiss  
Goes deeper. He fears life, as you might say—  
And people and the world. He would not stay  
There in the town, though every day  
He comes to find if all is well with me.  
He has his garden here, you see.  
Alone he lives.

WILL

I'll take him home with me.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

If you can make him go.  
There's something holds him here—  
Something we do not know.  
Pixy-work, most like. This is a place  
The village people fear—  
Strange things happen here, they say.

(He looks about him uneasily.)

---

The light  
Is fading, Will—this is Midsummer Night—

(He plucks two sprigs of the tree, puts one into Will's buttonhole, one into his own.)

Not that I am afraid—it's no disgrace  
To do what's prudent. Come you home with me  
And in the morning—

WILL

But I want to see  
Huey to-night.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Huey will never come  
Hearing a stranger's voice. He's only dumb,  
Not deaf!

WILL

Well, you should know him best.

(He lays his hand on the old man's shoulder, and his voice deepens.)

Uncle—have you ever heard  
Tidings of Lyliard?

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Not a word.

WILL

God's love on her, wherever she may be!



UNCLE SAUNDRY

You've never married, lad?

WILL

Her memory

Was wife enough for me.

(They go out together by the path. As the sound of their steps dies away young Huey comes from the thickets about the house, noiselessly as a forest animal, and stands looking after them.)

HUEY

That's a good man. I do not understand  
All that he says—but something in my breast  
Answers him. I could speak to him, I think,  
Almost as I can speak to her. To-night  
She will come to me—  
This night of all the year  
The pixy-folk are free  
To walk the world—and so she comes to me  
Midsummer Night—one night of all the year.  
Make haste below the brink  
Of the world, red sun! Give weary people rest,  
And give to me her voice, her eyes, her hand!  
Ah, never was a year so long as this!  
Yet short with dreams wherein I dared to kiss  
The smile upon her lips, and it set free

New wings of spirit both for her and me.  
Dear night, be beautiful for us—  
Heaven of stars, more glorious—  
Wood more fragrant, waves more sweet  
In your solemn rhythmic beat  
On sand made silver by her feet.  
Drowsy song of nesting birds  
Be the music of our words.  
From the earth and air and sea,  
From the white fires of the skies  
That burn forever in your eyes,  
Come, beloved—come to me!

(The sun has set, and in the gathering dusk the Pixy appears on the edge of the cliff. Her robes are the soft amethyst of the twilight sea behind her.)

THE PIXY

Huey—my dear.

HUEY

Never was so long a year.

THE PIXY

To me as well it has been long.

HUEY

Each night that brought this hour more near  
My heartbeats made a little song.

She is here, she is here,  
Though I cannot see.  
She will never be aught but near  
To me, to me.  
My dear—my dear—my dear!

(He lays her hand on his heart.)

Can you not feel the music of that song?  
Hark how it says—My dear—my dear—my  
dear!

THE PIXY

My boy, do I not know? We two belong  
Each to the other. While we are apart  
Your song so echoes in my pixy-heart  
That I could almost dream that heart was human  
Did I not know myself so well. Dear lad,  
I think you are the son I would have had  
If I had been a woman.  
Laugh at me if you will, but since we last  
Sat here together, all the year that's past  
I've nursed that dream as if it were a flower,  
Delighted in its growing hour by hour,  
Loved it and played with it as with a child.

HUEY

I do not laugh.

## THE PIXY

And always as I smiled  
And cherished it, the dream smiled back at me.  
I do not speak now of the deeper things,  
Though they were there,  
But of the happy overflow that springs  
From love's abundance—pleasures I could plan  
To take you by surprise—the coquetry  
A mother's many-sided tenderness  
Has for her son and no one else—to wear  
His colors in her dress—  
To see in his clear eyes that she is fair  
To him. It is not vanity so much  
As just the wish to give him all she can  
Of love and loveliness, that he may be  
Familiar with them when he is a man  
Choosing a mate—on a bewildering sea  
Of dreams not set adrift by the first touch.

## HUEY

I would not go adrift at the first touch,  
Not though I lived where maids would beckon  
me.

## THE PIXY

Do you still hide yourself? Ah, why?

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---

HEARTS AWAKE

---

HUEY

I cannot understand the things I see,  
All that I feel I never can express.  
What would men have for me but mockery  
If I should try to live among them?

THE PIXY

Yes—

We are shut out together, you and I—  
No fault of ours.

HUEY

I let the world go by.  
What lovelier than the world you make for me?

THE PIXY

Yet I would have your heart's horizon be  
Greater than any love of mine could span  
When you are grown a man.

HUEY

I am a man.  
Look in my eyes and see.

(She is sitting on the step of the house, and he on the ground at her feet. He rises to his knees; she bends forward and looks into his eyes. The gladness dies from her face, and she speaks drearily.)

THE PIXY

So I must lose you too.  
What has this love of yours to ask of me?

HUEY

Nothing.

THE PIXY

You ask for nothing? Is that true?

HUEY (still kneeling before her as before an altar)

My love asks of you

Not even the right to be.

Out of eternity it came.

You did not light, you cannot still

The white insistence of its flame.

I love you by the sovereign will

Of God who is the power to love.

Long as my soul, that love must live.

What should I ask of you? Above

All asking you have given me.

THE PIXY

(The moonlight has come into the glade, and lights the joy of her face.)

Above all asking I can give

You who ask nothing. Truth is sweeter far

Than any dream. See how the holy touch

Of the white moon transforms the shadowy  
wood.

The change is such

Here in myself who had not understood

That such a love could be.  
Still you seem my son—and yet far more.  
Those trees are lovely as they were before  
The moonlight laid on them that shining grace,  
Yet now—

HUEY

Ah, now transfigured is this place.  
The world will never call to me again.  
I shall no more regret  
That I am set  
Apart from other men—

THE PIXY (laying her arm about his shoulder and her  
cheek to his)

We are shut out together, you and I.

(There is the sound of steps coming along the path.  
She rises and stands full in the moonlight as Will enters.)

WILL

Lyliard! (she vanishes into the shadows)

I thought I saw her standing there,  
The moonlight on her hair,  
Just as I saw her twenty years ago.

HUEY (rises and comes to him frankly, with out-  
stretched hand)

You are a lover too—I know, I know!

WILL (without showing surprise at Huey's speech,  
quietly)  
I lost her, lad.

HUEY

Perhaps you asked too much.  
Had you asked nothing, only given her  
All that you were,—  
I—I see it here—but cannot tell—

WILL

I think you touch  
My trouble all too well.  
Why do you let the village think you dumb?

HUEY

I see too much—and then no words will come.  
Better live here and never speak at all  
Except to those who understand.

WILL

You mean—

HUEY (touching the Tree with a smile)  
The kindly folk in green,  
The birds and beasts who know me when I call,  
The sea, the stars, the winds, and one beside  
Who is the soul of all the world to me.

WILL

So speaks a lover of his bride.



HUEY

I am not wedded, nor shall ever be  
Save to a dream.

WILL

Aye—so it is with me.

HUEY

I know. I heard you speaking here to-day  
With Uncle Saundry. And you said you knew  
My father and my mother.

WILL

We all grew

Together here. I mind how when I went,  
Margaret, your mother, said to me, "My friend,  
Come back to Cornwall at your wandering's  
end."

Well, I came back—too late ever to see  
My friends on earth again,  
But not too late for you.

HUEY

And this is then  
Your wandering's end?

WILL

Not so.

My place is over yonder. When I go  
Will you go with me?

HUEY

No—ah, no, no, no!  
I must stay here.

WILL

But why?

HUEY

I love it so,  
And fear the world. . . .  
What goodness in your eyes!  
It shines through many sorrows. You are  
wise—

WILL

Not wise nor good, my boy, only a man  
Who lives among his kind as best he can  
And tries to make the world a better dwelling  
For those who shall come after. That's the soil  
On which is built the buying and the selling,  
The pleasure and the tumult and the toil  
That we call life, and those whose hearts are  
found  
Empty are poor, and those who grip that ground  
With roots that hold, are rich.

HUEY

And that is living.

WILL

Come you and help me live it.

HUEY

Help—you?

WILL

Dear lad, the world has need of such  
Clear eyes, and of the soul without a smutch  
That lights them. As for me, I live alone—  
Though I have comrades numberless,  
You seem to me my very own—

HUEY

Had I a life like other men for giving,  
It is to you, true man, that I would give it.  
My place is here—here I have happiness,  
Such happiness as those who share the pain  
And burdens of your world can never know.  
Oh, your eyes hurt me! but their pleading's vain.  
I have no choice—be merciful and go.  
Let me be happy once again  
As I was before you brought  
The vision of a world of men  
To vex my thought—  
The wrongs I cannot understand—

WILL

I cannot understand them—but I fight them,  
And some day greater souls than ours shall  
right them.

For the Great Battle, boy, give me your hand.  
We're made for deeper things than happiness—  
And then, some say it's in the world to find  
Even among the struggle and the stress.  
Will you not come?

HUEY (flings himself on the step of the house and hides  
his face on his arms)

I would I had been blind  
As well as dumb!

WILL (bends over him. As he does so, the spray of the  
Tree falls from his coat)

Take time—your mind may change. I lodge to-  
night

With Uncle Saundry; this is not good-by.  
Sometime we shall be comrades, you and I,  
In the great fight  
Whether you come with me or not. I know  
Some day your soul will drive and you will go,  
But—I would have you side by side with me  
If that may be.  
Good-night.

(Will goes down the path; as he disappears in the thicket, the Pixy comes from the shadow and stands looking after him. There is a pause. Huey raises his head from his arms, and seeing the little spray of leaves that Will has dropped, he takes it in his hand.)

HUEY

He wore this—it will be all  
Of him that I shall have to keep  
Except those tears that will not fall  
In the long nights bare of sleep.  
Leaves of the tree  
Of knowledge—knowledge what a man might  
be.  
Why should a crippled spirit learn  
Of powers he can never gain?  
Peace he loses past return  
And all his profit is but pain.

THE PIXY

So said I, once—and thought I could forget—  
But there is no forgetting.  
And yet, my dear—and yet—  
Would I if I could? That pain has grown  
My life's most precious stone  
And all else but the setting.

(Huey looks up at her; he clenches his hands, shaken by a silent inward struggle; then, lifting a fold of her robe to his lips, he rises to his knee)

HUEY

How that may be, I guess—and I shall know  
When I am gone.

THE PIXY (stooping over him)

Huey—you will not go?

HUEY

How easy it would be for me to stay  
Did I not love you so!

THE PIXY

He is not a dream like you and me—  
Following him, you would but lose your way!

HUEY

My love for you is all reality.  
Though I have lived a dream until to-day,  
In my soul's troubled twilight, that shines clear.  
I could not face the village—I took cover  
In solitude and silence for my fear  
And sad bewilderment—but, oh, my dear,  
How can you have a coward for your lover?  
I am afraid of all to which he calls me—

THE PIXY

So well, so cruelly well I understand!

## HUEY

Yet I must go, no matter what befalls me.  
How could I bear your touch upon my hand  
That shirked its effort at a man's true part?  
Although I fail and fall and go astray,  
Venture I must—the fire is in my heart.  
Dear love—I do not love you, if I stay.  
Tears—your tears upon my brow!  
They are a king's anointing to me. Now  
I can be strong!

(He springs erect, triumphant. She touches her eyes  
incredulously, and sees that he has spoken truly.)

THE PIXY (tremulously at first, then with glad  
strength)

My people cannot weep—  
What are these tears? To the elements must  
yield  
Her being wholly—with the magic, end. . . .  
It is the only way.  
You dare to live for me—shall I deny  
You power to live because I fear to die?  
Death—is it death when I can live in you,  
When I, the soulless, pass into your soul  
And give you to the world a perfect whole?  
I shall be part of all you think and do.

You leave me? No—I shall be with you still  
In the strong metal of your tempered will,  
In the white passion of your purity,  
In the clear wonder of your children's eyes—  
God grant that love and home for you may be!  
By these my tears upon your forehead wet  
And by my breath upon your lips, we rise  
To God together through eternity.

(She touches her eyes, then lays her hand on his forehead)

Water to the brow that you may know.

(He takes her reverently in his arms; she lifts her face to his)

Air to the lips that you may speak.

(As his lips meet hers, a cloud dims the moonlight. She draws back slowly, taking the spray of leaves from his hand.)

You are going now to him. Give these to me—  
I do not fear them now. Leaves of the tree  
Of knowledge—knowledge what a soul may  
be. . . .

(The shadow deepens to darkness. There is a moment's silence—broken by his steps as he goes away.)

Welcome darkness, if your way be bright!



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## HEARTS AWAKE

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(The cloud passes, and the moon shines out again in full splendor; her shadowy garment has slipped from her and she stands alone in pure white, the leaves clasped to her breast, her face lifted and transfigured with wondering joy.)

It is not darkness—it is light . . . all light. . .









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